

DANTE "GLUEFINGERS" LAVELLI

**HON. STEVEN C. LATOURETTE**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, when you were a Cleveland Browns fan, there is no halfway. To be a Browns fan requires a lifelong devotion, an unflinching loyalty, a reverence for all those who came before. As a Browns fan, you come to accept that your loyalty will be tested often, and in ways you cannot fathom—the Drive, the Fumble, the stealth, dark-of-night move to Baltimore. Yet, the loyalty never wavers—mostly because the rewards and the memories forged on Sunday afternoons between fathers, sons, friends and neighbors are so powerful—even when they are few and far between.

One of pillars of the Browns recently passed: Dante "Glue Fingers" Lavelli. He played with Otto Graham, Marion Motley and Lou "The Toe" Groza and was coached by the legendary Paul Brown. He led the team to seven championships in the 1940s and 1950s. He was a gridiron star in his hometown of Hudson, OH, which is part of my district. He led his high school team to three straight undefeated seasons.

Dante Lavelli was a World War II Army veteran who missed most of college to defend our Nation, trading the Horseshoe at Ohio State for the beaches of Normandy. The famed receiver—nicknamed "Gluefingers" because he never dropped the ball—was enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton more than 30 years ago, where his 386 catches for 6,488 yards and 62 touchdowns are part of football lore. He loved one woman for more than 60 years, his beloved wife, Joy. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, a son, and four grandchildren, including Aaron Bill, who worked for me in Washington and now attends law school.

I want to submit into the RECORD a column written by renowned Cleveland Plain Dealer sportswriter Terry Pluto, who so eloquently captured the magic of a man who meant so much to his family, his community, the Browns and the NFL. The article was published on January 25, 2009, the day after Lavelli's funeral in Hudson, OH.

He was a man who put salt on almost everything, especially a salad. He drank a huge can of ice tea each night and would drive his grandchildren around, forcing them to listen to polka music in the car.

Dante Lavelli was so much more than a Hall of Fame receiver for the Cleveland Browns, as family and friends made clear during his funeral at St. Mary's Church in Hudson on Saturday.

Aaron Bill walked up to the pulpit with a comb as he prepared to talk about his grandfather, who died Tuesday at the age of 85.

"He was always trying to comb my hair," said Bill. "He'd tell me that my sideburns were too long, that I needed a haircut. He wanted me to pull up my pants even when they were as high as they could go."

Yes, he's Dante Lavelli, "Gluefingers." He was Dante Lavelli, Mr. "Clutch." He was Dante Lavelli, the receiver's receiver, a player whose football personality was opposite to so many of the self-absorbed types who play the position today.

He's the man "who never dropped a pass that he touched, not in practices or games." So said great Browns coach Paul Brown at

Lavelli's Hall of Fame induction in 1975. He also never did a celebration dance in the end zone, because he had been there before—a total of 62 times in his 11-year Browns career.

Lavelli caught all but 20 of his 386 receptions from Hall of Famer Otto Graham. He also played games in 1956, his final season, with a notebook and pencil tucked inside his pads so he could sign up opponents after the game to join the new Players Association that he helped assemble.

"When my father walked, the floor shook," said his son, Edward Lavelli.

Or so it seemed.

He led Hudson High to three undefeated seasons in the late 1930s.

He played only three games at Ohio State before joining the Army, where he was in the 28th Infantry.

The flag on his casket was a reminder that Lavelli was part of the group of men who landed at Omaha Beach. He was in Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge in the winter of 1944-45, where the Allies lost an estimated 81,000 men.

In an interview with Scout.com, Lavelli said at one point in the fighting, "I spent three days in a foxhole." He also said he prayed the "Our Father" constantly for three days.

After his football career, Lavelli had ownership interest in a furniture store, in two bowling alleys and other business ventures. He had been the oldest living member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. He pushed for recognition of the 1948 Browns for their undefeated season, which had been dismissed by the NFL because it happened in the old All-American Football Conference.

As Father John Betters said in his homily, "Dante Lavelli truly was one of America's Greatest Generation."

Lavelli was married for nearly 60 years to Joy, and spent much of his later life in Westlake. His family members mentioned how he loved to win at anything, from gin rummy to golf to negotiating to buy a car.

Oldest daughter Lucinda said her father often offered this advice: "Save your money and get some rest."

Or as grandson Aaron Bill said, looking up and speaking to his deceased grandfather, "I love you very much, and I'll miss talking to you every day. And don't worry, my shoes aren't untied. I wore loafers."

IN RECOGNITION OF ARMY STAFF  
SERGEANT CARLO M. ROBINSON

**HON. MIKE ROSS**

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a true American hero. On January 17, 2009, our Nation and our state lost a brave soldier when Army Staff Sergeant Carlo Montel Robinson died in Bagram, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He died of wounds sustained in Kabul, Afghanistan, when a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle.

Staff Sergeant Robinson grew up in Hope, Arkansas—a tight-knit community where I had the privilege of growing up as well. Although I never had the honor to meet Staff Sergeant Robinson, on behalf of the community of Hope, I extend my utmost condolences to his family, friends and all who knew him for this devastating loss.

Staff Sergeant Robinson was assigned to the 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade at

Fort Polk, La., and carried out his duties with pride in his country and without reservation. Staff Sergeant Robinson spent the last thirteen years in the U.S. Army where he served with distinction and dedication, epitomizing a true patriot.

My deepest thoughts and prayers are with his daughters, Carneshia and Destiny, son, Da'karia, mother, Jennifer, grandmother, Martha, and the rest of his family, friends and loved ones during this difficult time.

Today, I ask all members of Congress to join me as we honor the life of Staff Sergeant Carlo Robinson and his legacy, and all those men and women in our Armed Forces who gave the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CITIZENS  
INVOLVEMENT IN CAMPAIGNS  
(CIVIC) ACT

**HON. THOMAS E. PETRI**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, today, Representative PAUL KANJORSKI and I are introducing bipartisan legislation to establish a program of limited tax credits and tax deductions to get average Americans more involved in the political process. This bill, the Citizens Involvement in Campaigns (CIVIC) Act, will broaden the base of political contributors and limit the influence of big money donors in federal elections.

We need to take a fresh look at innovative approaches to campaign finance reform, with special attention paid to ideas that encourage, and not restrict, greater participation in our campaigns. Toward this end, I have been advocating tax credits and deductions for small political contributions for many years. An updated tax credit system would be a simple and effective means of balancing the influence of big money donors and bringing individual contributors back to our campaigns. The impact of this counterweight will reduce the burden of raising money, as well as the appearance of impropriety that accompanies the money chase.

Most would agree that the ideal way to finance political campaigns is through a broad base of donors. But, as we are all painfully aware, the economic realities of modern-day campaigning lead many candidates to focus most of their efforts on collecting funds from a few large donors. This reality alienates many Americans from the political process.

The concept of empowering small donors is not a new idea. For example, from 1972 to 1986, the federal government offered a tax credit for small political contributions. This provided an incentive for average Americans to contribute to campaigns in small amounts while simultaneously encouraging politicians to solicit donations from a larger pool of contributors. Currently, six geographically and politically diverse states (Oregon, Minnesota, Ohio, Virginia, Arkansas, and Arizona) offer their own tax credits for political contributions. These state-level credits vary in many respects, but all share the same goal of encouraging average Americans to become more involved.

The CIVIC Act can begin the process of building this counterweight for federal elections. This bill is designed to encourage Americans who ordinarily do not get involved in politics beyond casting a vote every two or four years (that is, if they bother to vote at all) to become more active participants in our political process.

The CIVIC Act will reestablish and update the discontinued federal tax credit. Taxpayers can choose between a 100 percent tax credit for political contributions to federal candidates or national political parties (limited to \$200 per taxable year), or a 100 percent tax deduction (limited to \$600 per taxable year). Both limits, of course, are doubled for joint returns. As long as political parties and candidates promote the existence of these credits, the program can have a real impact and aid in making elections more grassroots affairs than they are today.

A limited tax credit for political contributions can be a bipartisan, cost-efficient method for helping balance the influence of large money donors in the American electoral process. Instead of driving away most Americans from participation in political life, we can offer an invitation for citizens to play a larger role in political campaigns. It seems to me that this will be a fruitful way to clean up our system, while at the same time convincing Americans that they actually have a meaningful stake in elections.

#### A TRIBUTE TO SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SHERIFF GARY PENROD

#### HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. LEWIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the most respected public servants in my district, San Bernardino County Sheriff Gary Penrod, who is stepping down this month after nearly 40 years protecting our citizens.

A Southern California native, Gary Stephen Penrod graduated from Redlands Schools, worked as a U.S. Forest Service firefighter and is a U.S. Army veteran. But his life has been in law enforcement, and he has served in the sheriff's department since being deputized in 1971.

Sheriff Penrod spent time on patrol in most of the vast desert and mountain reaches of San Bernardino County, and received regular promotions over the years. When the city of Hesperia incorporated in 1988, the sheriff's department contracted to provide police services, and Gary Penrod became the first Hesperia Police Chief.

By the time our former sheriff retired in 1994, Gary Penrod had been promoted to Deputy Chief. He easily defeated six other candidates and was sworn in as sheriff on Jan. 3, 1995. He has been reelected to three more four-year terms.

When he first took office in 1994, San Bernardino County had a population of 774,000 people. Today, more than 2 million people live in the sheriff's jurisdiction. Deputies responded to 617,000 calls in 1994, last year they had more than 1.2 million.

Mr. Speaker, San Bernardino County was known in the past for having some colorful

characters as our top law enforcer. Sheriff Penrod has had a reputation for quiet leadership, for helping the department achieve high recognition for professionalism, and for encouraging his deputies to stay on the cutting edge as law enforcement has modernized.

During his tenure, Sheriff Penrod implemented community based policing and many innovative programs and staffing enhancements including: Crime Free Multi-Housing, Operation CleanSWEEP, Public Safety Internship Academy, Marijuana Eradication Team, Methamphetamine Lab Task Force, Narcotics Special Enforcement Teams and Gang Enforcement Units. Sheriff Penrod oversaw the merger with the San Bernardino Marshall's office and in 2005 he became Sheriff-Coroner of San Bernardino County.

A highly respected leader, Sheriff Penrod is a member of San Bernardino County Children's Network, San Bernardino County Chiefs of Police and Sheriff's Association, California Police Officers' Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Sheriffs' Association, Western State Sheriffs' Association, California State Coroners' Association, and the Governor's Corrections Standard Authority. He is a past president of the California State Sheriffs' Association.

Although he is respected for his professionalism and progressive thinking, among his deputies Sheriff Penrod is most known as someone who always cares for the members of his department. Wounded deputies have often told of finding the sheriff by their bedside, personally promising to help them and their families.

Madam Speaker, after 38 years as a law enforcement officer, Sheriff Penrod has decided to retire to spend more time with his wife Nancy and at his hobbies—horseback riding, raising cattle, fishing, camping and snow skiing. Please join me in thanking him for his years of service, and wishing him and Nancy success in all of their future endeavors.

#### RECOGNITION OF STEELTON-HIGHSPIRE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM FOR THEIR SECOND CONSECUTIVE PIAA SINGLE A CHAMPIONSHIP

#### HON. TIM HOLDEN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. HOLDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 2008–2009 Steelton-Highspire Steamrollers, from Steelton, PA in my congressional district. They completed an undefeated season with a victory over Clairton High School to become PIAA Single A State football champions.

The Steamrollers certainly had a season to remember setting school records in wins, points, and games played. They established the longest winning streak in school history with 25 wins dating back to last year. The Rollers capped off the season by winning their fourth straight District 3 title and their second consecutive PIAA State Single A Championship.

The Rollers were led by a group of seniors who will go down in Steelton-Highspire history as the most successful class in the great history of Steamroller football. In 4 years this

group compiled a record of 51 wins and 9 losses winning the district title all 4 years and two state championships. The offense was led by senior tailback Jeremiah Young, who ran for 2,812 yards and 30 touchdowns on 283 carries. Mr. Young broke the State's all-time career rushing record and stands seventh all time in the Nation with 9,027 yards.

I congratulate Steelton-Highspire High School and Coach Rob Deibler on a season to remember.

#### HONORING THOMAS G. LANDAAL

#### HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Thomas G. Landaal. Sadly, Mr. Landaal passed away on December 5, 2007, at the age of 53, and the International Corrugated Packaging Foundation will posthumously induct Tom Landaal into their Circle of Distinguished Leaders on March 31st in Washington, DC at the joint meetings of the Fibre Box Association and the Association of Corrugated Converters. Mr. Landaal will be the ninth person to be inducted into this circle.

Born in Hinsdale, IL, Tom, as he was known to his friends, relocated to Flint, MI as a child. After graduating from Powers Catholic High School he obtained two degrees from Ferris State University, an AS degree in Building Construction and a BS degree in Business Administration. In 1979 he assumed a managerial role in the family business, Landaal Packaging Systems. As president of Landaal Packaging Systems he went on to become a leader in the packaging industry. He was affiliated with the International Corrugated Case Association in Paris, the Federation Europeenne des Fabricants de Carton Ondule based in Paris, the Sales and Marketing Executives and Technical Association Pulp and Paper Industry, as well as the International Corrugated Packaging Foundation. Tom served on the Board of Directors of the Fibre Box Association and the Independent Corrugated Converters Association. He was chair of the Fibre Box Association's Independent Sheet Plant Committee and served as the Fibre Box Association's representative on the Board of the Independent Corrugated Converters Association for many years.

In addition to his work in packaging industry, Tom Landaal was very active in his community and is sorely missed. He held leadership roles with the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, Hurley Medical Center, Hurley Foundation, Flint Classroom Support Fund, Hero of Flint, Burton Business Association, Burton Economic Development Corporation, Friends of Sloan Museum, Flint College and Cultural Center, Incorporated, Goodwill Industries of Mid-Michigan, Heartland Manor, Information Services of Michigan, Michigan State University, University Affiliated Hospitals of Flint, the Industrial Mutual Association, the Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Manufacturers Association, and Powers Alumni Association. He belonged to several golf and ski groups including the National Ski Patrol.

Madam Speaker, the International Corrugated Packaging Foundation's Circle of Distinguished Leaders was instituted to honor